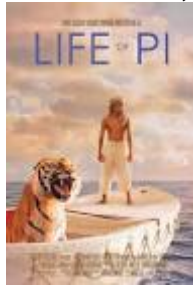


## LIFE OF PI

By Lorraine Viade, Psy.D.



*Life of Pi* is breathtaking. Not just because of the special effects, although those are amazing, but for the emotional impact. This story is one of survival, trauma, resilience, and ultimately of faith. The search for meaning and personal will is so tangible in this film that you are held captive throughout the tale of a man whose extraordinary ability to go on after tragedy strikes will leave you questioning everything over and over again. The internal and external dialogue that the faithful have with their imagining of God is so personal, and yet so much a part of who and what we are. The essence of humanity is in how we handle suffering. People from India seem to have a pretty good handle on it.

In the deft hands of Ang Lee's direction, this odyssey of confrontation and of battling the demons within and without is a true must-see. Some movies are good stories, others are good lessons. *Life of Pi* gives us both. What we do with the hand fate deals us is not up to God; it is up to us. No matter how hard the test or how painful the ordeal, we go on or we give up. Making that choice is what makes us the captains of our own hearts. The human heart can be broken in many, many ways. The human spirit is another matter.

Watching this film was like being on the lap of God, listening to a bedtime story. I imagine this would be one that would be told in Heaven. That is, if Heaven really exists. The human psyche is always fascinating in how it can protect us from the horrors we cannot face and how ferocious the instinct to survive can be.

Does it matter which religion we follow as long as we seek truth? And who defines truth? Is truth reality? Does it matter which story we use to make our lives easier to endure? It is said that we create our own reality. Never has a film demonstrated this belief more than *Life of Pi*. I left with a desire to read the book. The last time that happened was when I saw *What Dreams May Come*. In that case, the movie was amazing and the book was even better.

This is the beginning of a new year with new opportunities to live the ways we want to live and to embrace the full range of our emotions and our abilities. It is a time for reflection and retrospection of what went well in our lives so far, and what we wish to create in the time we have left. *Life of Pi* inspired me to fully appreciate what I have and what I have endured in my own life. See *Life of Pi* for yourself. Feel it for yourself.

I give *Life of Pi* five couches.

